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Title: Farmers get chance to talk agritourism

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Farmers looking for ways to increase their agricultural revenue can meet with representatives from Kentucky's Agritourism Advisory Council at Chaney's Dairy Barn on Thursday.

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Farmers looking for ways to increase their agricultural revenue can meet with representatives from Kentucky's Agritourism Advisory Council at Chaney's Dairy Barn on Thursday.

"We're sharing ideas," said Carl Chaney, owner of the Bowling Green farm. The meeting's goal is for farmers to exchange experiences and learn from each other.

Additionally, "Survivor" cast member and Kentucky farmer Roger Bingham will be speaking. Bingham also serves as deputy executive director of agriculture marketing and product promotion under cabinet Secretary Richie Farmer.

The meeting, scheduled to start at 10 a.m., is the third of four Agritourism Leadership Forums in western and central Kentucky to bring together agritourism business leaders to find better ways to increase revenues.

The program costs \$10 and includes lunch.

Hosted by the University of Kentucky Cooperate Extension Services, the forums will also include members of Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Department of Travel discussing marketing ideas, grants, loans and partnership ideas.

The forum comes as a grassroots movement is under way to promote agritourism while work in Frankfort pushes toward similar goals.

Last summer the Ag Development Board awarded the Department of Agriculture \$400,000 to open a statewide office of agritourism in the capital. The funding is specifically being used to conduct a study and hire a full-time coordinator for the Office of Agritourism.

In tandem, West Kentucky Corp., on behalf of the Agritourism Advisory Council, has applied for \$300,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to keep farmers engaged in

agritourism as the state conducts its study.

The meeting in Bowling Green is the only one at an agritourism business, said Debby Spencer, tourism development specialist at West Kentucky Corp.

Chaney's Dairy Barn sells ice cream, sausage, cheese, ham, bacon, crafts and handmade soap, Spencer said.

On Friday the final forum of the series will be held at the Christian County Cooperative Extension Service Office in Hopkinsville.

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